Presiding Officer Robert Wilson called the 672nd Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate to order on March 27, 2008 at 3:30 p.m. in Herter Hall, Room 227.

A. PRESENTATION BY CHARLENA SEYMOUR, PROVOST AND SENIOR VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS; JOHN CUNNINGHAM, CHAIR OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE; AND RANDALL KNOPER, CHAIR OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

“PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE GENERAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE”

(See attached)

Senator Richard Bogartz stated he would like to see something on how to study inserted into the General Education program. He offered a one-credit course on the topic this semester. Three-quarters of the students were only there for the credit, but there were some students who still needed to know more about how to study. This topic could even be covered in the form of an online certificate program where materials having to do with management of time, for example, could be available. The University could also offer actual courses on how to study.

John Cunningham, Chair of the General Education Task Force and Deputy Provost, stated that this is an important topic, but he is not sure it should be imbedded in the General Education curriculum. It could be included as a skill to be mastered before students graduate. However, the way this is being focused on at the moment is through learning communities and Bob Feldman’s power up for freshmen. The question is whether to imbed it in the requirements of General Education to verify it is happening.

Senator Marta Calas stated the courses she teaches usually require strong critical thinking skills. They require an understanding of broader problems in the world in the context of international management. When students get into her class, it appears as if they have never taken a General Education course. She stated there needs to be a way to go across the curriculum from the General Education courses to the majors. It does not matter how many of us reiterate how important these skills are, to the students, they still do not seem important.

Randall Knoper, Chair of the General Education Council, stated that the relationship between General Education and the majors is something we have to work out. The General Education Council is attuned to the problem. There is also a sense on the General Education Council that General Education is not necessarily something that happens in students’ first two years, even though, practically speaking, most of the courses are that way. Rather, General Education is something that goes all the way through the years that students are here. For that reason, it means that there should also be some General Education courses that go beyond the 100- and 200-level.

Charlena Seymour, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, added that the purpose of the General Education curriculum is not only to increase and improve the knowledge base of students but also to provide certain types of skills. It is assumed that the students will be able to transfer these skills to the major. It is important to define what these skills are so that the students will be able to use them, not only in the General Education courses, but also in the major and other places as well.

Deputy Provost Cunningham stated that the General Education curriculum is a menu. If a student takes one course from social and behavioral sciences, for example, and one from arts and literature, no matter the combination, he/she should be generally educated. That makes it more difficult to see if all the purposes are met. There is talk of creating a General Education syllabus, telling the students which of the purposes of General Education are being addressed in that course. The Task Force is asking, where does analytical reasoning happen? Where does working in diverse groups happen? In the future, faculty members may have to state how their course is contributing and what will be improved in their course.

Senator W. Brian O’Connor stated that over the years, he has noticed student advisors during the summer often instill ideas in the freshmen regarding the General Education courses. He stated that he applauds the poster but thinks there should be a conscious effort to include these student advisors. The student advisors could then say, “This is what General Education is about. It is not just a list of courses to get out of the way as soon as possible.”
Deputy Provost Cunningham responded that is probably a correct assessment of the freshmen orientation. But, there is a First-Year Task Force. Also, the Provost and Esther Terry, the acting Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, have charged another group to look at the New Students Orientation and how that leads into advising during the entire first year. Once a student declares, colleges own more of the responsibilities for advising their own majors. The quality of advising, the importance of courses in the curriculum, and the ability to get courses and proceed to graduation are all related topics that the campus is dealing with in one way or another.

Senator Maurianne Adams stated that this is going to involve a major culture shift for the campus. Many faculty members have inherited General Education courses and might not have been thinking about the purpose of these courses. In some cases, courses have served both as introductions to the major and as General Education classes. Based on the presentation today, it seems faculty must start articulating the goals of General Education courses to students. The University cannot expect students to transfer these skills until professors have affirmed them explicitly, in a wide range of classes. In the future, when faculty say certain courses speak to specific goals and outcomes, they can know they are advertising truthfully, and those particular dimensions of the General Education program will take place in the classes.

Provost Seymour added it is important to make General Education the responsibility of the campus, not just one council or person. It is something the campus needs to begin having conversations and dialogues about. The General Education academy this summer will bring people together to discuss General Education. There will be students there to give feedback and get involved. The grand purpose is to take back General Education, to claim it and say the University wants to do something better.

Ernest May, Secretary of the Faculty Senate, congratulated everyone involved in this process, including John Jenkins who managed the process before it came to a caesura in 2001. Secretary May stated he wanted to discuss the magnitude of the management problem. There are about 900 instructors on the campus involved in General Education. It is a third of the undergraduate curriculum. It is a huge problem, but for the first time in 30 years or so, the University is making a concerted campus effort to bring this under management. Not all of this should be placed on the backs of the General Education curriculum. Some of the responsibility, especially in regards to the outcomes, has to go back to the majors.

With the resources available, there is no way the General Education curriculum can be responsible for taking students from when they come in and make sure they write well and have good critical thinking skills. That may be something in which the majors have to bear responsibility for, or it may be that there are other aspects of this that should be done in cooperation with General Education. Using available resources, the University is going to have to be smart. This will involve quite a lot of management thinking and dialogue.

Senator Mokhtar Atallah stated that faculty who are handed these courses do not always understand the requirements General Education courses need to meet. There needs to be a continual review of these courses to make sure they are taught in the spirit of General Education. There has been no push from the department to teach General Education a certain way. On the other hand, the faculty does not have incentive to spend time on General Education. Teaching General Education courses requires more activity, action, and time on the part of the faculty than regular courses in their discipline. There needs to be incentives for the faculty who teach these courses and participation from the faculty who are teaching these courses to buy into the concept of General Education.

Senator Calas stated people in certain disciplines really put down General Education. It goes back to the question of commitment and involvement. In many ways, faculty members do not see General Education as separate from everything else. The question is: how should faculty change their relationship to General Education? General Education is almost the core of the undergraduate program. Everything else should then work around it. Only when the University has that commitment, will the program change.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Principal Administrative Officers

Joyce Hatch, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, stated that in the next two weeks the University will be implementing pedestrian-only zones on campus. The campus has put up road blocks in the past, but once they come down, the vehicles still drive in these areas. This time, the campus is starting with three pedestrian-only zones. There will be very clear signs. The signs are going up next week, and this program will start the week after.
This time, the Police Department will be writing tickets. These tickets will go against the driver’s license. During the first 2-4 weeks, the driver will be issued a warning for the first or second violation. After that, the offender will receive an official ticket.

Most of the violators are from outside the campus. The University has worked with Procurement, and they have put out information to vendors. For any new contract, the vendor will have to sit down and look at the maps. For existing vendors, a lot of information is going out in the form of warnings. Physical Plant Director Pat Daly has also met with the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Senates.

There will be three pedestrian-only areas. One is from Whitmore to the Chapel. There is another area between the Parking Garage, going from west to east, past West Experiment Station. Another one is the area around the Lederle Graduate Research Center. A lot of people have just gotten used to driving up to and running into and behind Lederle, so this might be a tricky area. In order to do business, there will be exceptions for groups that have an event and absolutely have to get equipment into a certain building. They can contact the police to get an exception. Otherwise, there is always a way to get into a building. Every building has a service road. It may not be on that pedestrian walkway that people are used to, but the campus has designated areas on the back sides of buildings.

Also this semester, the Chancellor appointed a number of groups to EPAC, the Environmental Performance Action Committee. There are two students, two faculty members, a dean and a lot of staff on the Committee. The goal is for the Committee to recommend a five-year and a ten-year plan to reduce the University’s carbon footprint. The campus already has a carbon footprint tracking system and has been doing this for the past few years. Since 2004, through its energy conservation efforts, the campus has reduced electrical usage by 15 percent, steam usage by 24 percent, and water usage by 40 percent. At the same time, the University added 860 beds in the new apartment complex. The campus has made many mechanical improvements. The Committee will look at further ways to reduce the University’s use of energy.

Paul Kostecki, Vice Provost for Research, in response to Vice Chancellor Hatch’s comments, stated that when Ian Bowles, Energy and Environment Secretary for the State, came to the campus, he was very impressed and surprised with UMass’ efforts. He called UMass the poster child for all state agencies. Bowles was not aware of any group that had done as much to conserve energy.

The Clean Energy Task Force’s final report was submitted to the Trustees, and they voted on and accepted it. The report can be found on the Research website. This campus represents about 80-85 percent of the information and activities that went into the report.

There will be a Research Appreciation Dinner on Wednesday, May 14. Those invited should make a note of that and save the date.

Finally, the research enterprise is really flourishing. Last month, the numbers show an increase in sponsored research activity awards, a 15 percent increase over last year. Last year, there was a twelve percent increase, which was the biggest increase that the campus had experienced as far back as anyone could remember. At UConn and UVM, they seem to be bemoaning that things are going down; NIH funding is less. UMass seems to be doing better. Vice Provost Kostecki applauded the research faculty and faculty in general. Money matters, so it is even better when you come to the indirect cost recovery. UMass is up 21 percent, which is $4 million over where they were last year.

2. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Secretary May congratulated Richard Rogers on his appointment as Associate Provost for Academic Technology. Rogers has been doing a great job. The Learning Commons is just one example. It was created in cooperation with OIT and the Library, but it is a good example of what can be accomplished.
Secretary May also noted that in the last month or two the Commonwealth passed the legislation needed to create a Secretary of Education. That Secretary of Education is also a member of the Board of Trustees. Paul Reville will probably be joining the Board this fall.

The April 10 meeting of the Faculty Senate will most likely be canceled. There will be another meeting on May 15. At the next regular meeting of the Senate, on April 24, the Outreach Council and Sharon Fross will discuss an exciting initiative that they have undertaken.

3. The Faculty Delegates to the Board of Trustees

W. Brian O’Connor, Faculty Delegate to the Board of Trustees, stated that the new Chair, Rob Manning, re instituted a policy that was abandoned three years ago. He invited the delegates for dinner Tuesday night at the Dartmouth campus. Now that Rob Manning is the new Chair, there are two new Co-Chairs, Ruben King-Shaw and James Karam. James Karam was the former Chair of the Board before Stephen Tocco.

At the meeting, President Wilson mentioned the Public Service Awards. Professor Maria Idali Torres from the School of Public Health was the Amherst recipient of a Public Health Award.

There was tremendous discussion both defending and objecting to the student fee increases. Obviously, the motion was passed. Trustee Rego stated that she, like many other of the Trustees, had worked 1-2 jobs while in college in order to pay bills. She said this is a realistic increase in fees, and she pointed out that it is $5,000 less than she and her husband pay to send her four-year-old to day care.

As previously mentioned, the Doctorate in Nursing Practice was proposed for three campuses. At the Committee on Academic and Student Affairs, the Boston and Lowell campuses were deferred and only the Worcester campus was put forward. However, at the full Board meeting, the motion for the Worcester campus was amended to add Boston, and then eventually Lowell. There was a motion to have a committee study the health programs on all five campuses, which was passed. Trustee Janet Pearl will be the Chair of that Committee.

There was an announcement from the Chair of the Advancement Committee. As of December 31, 2007, there is now $360 million in the endowment. When Senator O’Connor first started going to the Trustee meetings, there was probably not $3 million in the endowment.

The resolution to promote the Amherst Campus as the flagship campus was passed without much discussion. One comment from Trustee DiBiaggio emphasized that the strategic plan is an outline and will serve as the basis for the plan that the new Chancellor will direct.

As Paul Kostecki announced, the Trustees did pass the motion to accept the final report on Clean Energy for the Commonwealth powered by the University of Massachusetts. The Committee on Science, Technology and Research was basically the brainchild of former Trustee John Armstrong. Science, technology and research was never adequately covered by committee on the Board of Trustees until this Committee was created about three years ago. The report that Paul Kostecki chaired is instrumental in showing that the Trustees are taking this Committee seriously.

3. The Representative of the Massachusetts Society of Professors

Steven Brewer, Representative of the Massachusetts Society of Professors, stated there will be a lobby day for the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts on April 16. A statement from the Provost or Chancellor, describing the kinds of participation students can have, is going to be forthcoming. Senator Brewer also thanked them for agreeing to fund buses to carry students to participate in the event. The message of PHENOM is “fix it, fund it, and afford it.” Fix it stands for passing the capital budget. Fund it means providing decent funding for the University. Afford it stands for increasing funding for MASSGrant.
MASSGrant provides much of students’ need-based support. It used to be about 85-90 percent of tuition and fees but now represents about 10 percent when a student receives it.

There is going to be a rally on April 8, in advance of lobby day. MSP encourages faculty to participate and inform students about it.

C. QUESTION PERIOD (10-Minute Limit)

Senator W.C. Conner asked for an update on the search for a new Chancellor.

Secretary May stated that the airport interviews have been completed. Members of the Committee say the candidates are outstanding. They are very impressed with the quality of about 10-12 candidates. The campus visits should take place in late April or early May.

Senator Richard Bogartz asked the members of the Rules Committee to consider whether it might be better for the Faculty Senate to meet in a smaller room.

Senator O’Connor commented that in his forty years at UMass, he has never witnessed such a magnificent comeback by the UMass basketball team as the one that took place last Tuesday night against Syracuse. It shows that the coaches have instilled in these students the idea that they should never quit or give up.

D. NEW COURSES

There is no report associated with the following motion:

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<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
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<tr>
<td>SOCIOL 328</td>
<td>“Introduction to Social Work”</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCIOL 346</td>
<td>“Communities and Crime”</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCIOL 385</td>
<td>“Gender and the Family”</td>
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MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the courses SOCIOL 328, 346 and 385, as recommended by the Academic Matters Council.

The motion was seconded and adopted.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Special Report of the Academic Matters Council concerning Suspending the Concentration in “Social Research and Data Analysis” within the Undergraduate Major in Sociology, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 08-025 with Motion No. 25-08.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve Suspending the Concentration in “Social Research and Data Analysis” within the Undergraduate Major in Sociology, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 08-025.

The motion was seconded and adopted.

2. Special Report of the Academic Matters and Program and Budget Councils concerning Revision of Requirements for the Existing Undergraduate Management Major in the Isenberg School of Management, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 08-026 with Motion No. 26-08.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Revision of Requirements for the Existing Undergraduate Management Major in the Isenberg School of Management, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 08-026.

The motion was seconded and adopted.
3. Special Report of the Academic Priorities, Graduate and Program and Budget Council concerning the New Concentration in Green Building within the M.S. in Forest Resources, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 08-027 with Motion No. 27-08.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the New Concentration in Green Building within the M.S. in Forest Resources, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 08-027.

The motion was seconded and adopted.

The 672nd Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate stood adjourned at 4:53 p.m. on March 27, 2008.

The proceedings of this meeting are available on audiotape in the Faculty Senate Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest D. May
Secretary of the Faculty Senate